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lot). The sacred oak tree is mentioned by several early chroniclers. Now while the cult of vegetation, water spirits, and to some lesser extent of stones, in the Balkans at any rate, retains most of its primal character and importance, so that the sacrificing to trees, or on trees, for instance, can be found almost exactly as described by Herbord among the West Slavs and by Ibn Rosteh in Russia, that of patron deities, of an ancient Slavonic pantheon, does not remain at all. Not a single name of a Slavonic god has been recorded here beyond doubt; not a single image recovered.

Taking all the evidence together, it is not impossible to conclude that the complex pantheism of the other Slavs which required an established priesthood, was not typical of the religion of the Southern Slavs; whereas in the north and west the priestly cult overshadowed older popular forms. Even there the cult of the sacred tree is spoken of as an ancient custom of the people, not one of the ministrations of the priests. The priests themselves delivered oracles as well as read omens; and besides carrying out performances within the shrine to which the populace was not admitted, or at which it assisted only as an audience, they took upon themselves to impersonate gods in order to mislead the ignorant. Literary sources in the Balkans have plentiful references to 'magicians', etc., but those to priests occur mainly in conventional accounts of paganism, except in the accounts of the Bulgars during the Asperuh period.

The two chief offices of priesthood were sacrifice and divining, which could, in the north, elevate the priest to the position of tribal leader. For the Balkans we are told that the reading of omens accompanied blood sacrifice.

The priests of the East and West Slavs were a caste apart, specially endowed and specially venerated. In the long list of terms connected with priestcraft and sorcery in early monuments, and in the vocabularies of modern languages, the titles of various kinds of priest and magician and

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doctor indicate a difference of method and function rather than a distinct rank or profession. Long after the priest ceased to be recognised these different functions were regularly given their proper Slavonic names in the South Slav area also. In documents these are found mixed with names coined from Greek. In the *Syntagma*, for instance: '*O vlhvahъ, oučitelnyhъ, bajalničěhъ, ište že zvezdoslovcěhъ, obavničěhъ, nъ oubo i čarodejehъ, otrovniceh̃, i navezatelhъ.*' In another South Slav monument, the *Ivaničev Zbornik* (cf. *Starine*, XXIII, 56): '*ki věruje vešte nego ima vervati tako, kako su vražiteli i vražitelьnice i bahornice....*' In the Code of Dušan: '*volhъ, resnikъ, madjinikъ, otrovnikъ.*' Further we have: '*maglinik, glědačь, kobnikъ, vračь, bajalnikъ, obavьnikъ, oblakogonci, sanovnici.*' A gloss in the *Ilovačka Kormčaja* reads: '*...i o vlьsvěhъ i o obavnicehъ i o zvezdocьtьcihъ i provědьcihъ i o čarodějenihъ i o otrovleniihъ i o naouzehъ rekše ouzlehъ*' (cf. *Starine*, VI, p. 81). In a seventeenth-century manuscript: '*radi magesnicy i samovili i basnarki i zalaganie i brodnicy i baenie...samovili, basnarky, brodnicy, baene... i koito nositъ bourǫn na sebi*' (cf. Kačanovski, *Pamjatniki*, 32, etc.).

Magic was probably not simply a vocation but a gift, as it is reckoned to be to-day. Among the Old Bulgars, for instance, the second son of the emperor Simeon was given to magic and could turn himself into any kind of wild beast.[1]

Procopius refers to divining carried out by the priests at a blood sacrifice. Helmoldus relates that the people depended upon such prophecies in every emergency. On festivals they gathered to hear oracles, and to sacrifice. 'After the sacrifice the libation blood was poured over the priests that their oracles might be more propitious....For it is the opinion of many that the demon is freed the easier by means of blood.' Ditmar gives an account of divination by blood and ashes, and so on, and if historical evidence were lacking for the practices of the South Slavs, the blood sacrifice among

[1] Luitprandus Episc. Cremonensis, *Opera*, III, 29.